



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 7, 2011

CONTACT:
Sue Walitsky 202-224-4524 or
202-320-0819

CARDIN OPPOSES WICKER AMENDMENT THAT WOULD BLOCK COLLECTIVE BARGAINING VOTE FOR TSA EMPLOYEES AT BWI AND NATIONWIDE

Washington - Speaking from the floor of the Senate, **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)**, praised the recent decision by U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Administrator John Pistole that will permit the TSA security officers who work at BWI-Thurgood Marshall International Airport and at airports around the nation to vote on whether or not they wish to be represented by a union for the purpose of engaging in limited, clearly defined collective bargaining at the national level on non-security employment issues. An amendment currently pending in the Senate sponsored by Senator Roger Wicker (R-TN) would prohibit such a vote.

“Administrator Pistole’s decision was a smart one that will help ensure the safety of the travelling public by giving the TSA the flexibility it needs to respond to real threats and emergencies while helping recruit and retain the best employees,” **said Senator Cardin.**

“More than six months ago, I urged my colleagues to support what I called ‘smart collective bargaining’ for the more than 60,000 TSA employees who work at BWI-Marshall and other airports around the country, which would include a public safety and emergency exception. I was pleased to see Administrator Pistole adopt this position, rejecting a false choice between national security and fair representation for federal employees. Smart collective bargaining will increase stability and professionalism in the TSA workplace, and it should dramatically reduce attrition rates, job dissatisfaction and increased costs, all of which will enhance transportation security for travelers.”

Senator Cardin, who was Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Terrorism and Homeland Security Subcommittee during the 111th Congress, stated that “countless American heroes work every day to protect us and keep us safe under collective bargaining agreements.” He pointed out that DHS’ Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) Officers, some of whom work at the same airports as TSA employees, employees of the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Protective Service, as well as the U.S. Capitol Police, all operate under collective bargaining agreements.

###